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ABSTRACT

Resolutions on the role of state higher education agencies are presented, along with related excerpts from the newsletter of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). The resolutions represent the position of SHEEO concerning the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965. The resolutions call on the U.S. Congress to: define within the Act a state higher education agency; recognize that higher education data collections and dissemination services of the National Center for Education Statistics are in the national public interest and should be fully funded by the Department of Education; increase support for research and demonstration projects to improve the delivery of adult learning services; increase funding for programs under Title II of the Higher Education Act (libraries); require institutions applying for assistance under Title III (institutional aid) to demonstrate consistency between their proposals and existing state plans and institutional authorization, and that applications for aid be subject to approval by the state higher education agency; halt the erosion of direct aid to students; expand federal support for teacher education and for international education; reactivate facility grant and loan programs authorized under Title VII (facilities); and substantially increase funding for graduate education. (SW)

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RESOLUTION ON THE ROLE OF STATE HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCIES

WHEREAS SHEEO has consistently advocated a significant state role in the implementation of federally-funded education programs, and whereas SHEEO further believes that the federal-state relationship should be reexamined with the goal of restoring an appropriate balance between state and federal responsibilities to provide maximum flexibility, responsiveness and program effectiveness at the state level; and

WHEREAS Federal higher education policy should seek to achieve equitable access to higher education consistent with a recognition of the responsibility of each state to plan and coordinate the provision of higher education within its boundaries, and with full recognition of the differences among the states in meeting their citizens' needs for higher education; and

WHEREAS Present federal law does not adequately recognize the role and responsibility of the state higher education agencies (SHEAs) as the responsible state entities providing such coordination and policy direction;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. A definition of a state higher education agency be incorporated in Title XII of the Higher Education Act as follows:

   "State higher education agency (SHEA) is the state board, council, commission or agency, or the executive officer of such entity, primarily responsible for the supervision or coordination of institutions of higher education operating in or created by the state. If there is no such board, council, commission, agency or officer, or, if there is more than one such board, council, commission, agency or officer, the State Higher Education Agency (SHEA) shall be the board, council, commission, agency or officer designated by the Governor of the state, or by state law."

2. As the existence of valid, consistent and uniform higher education data and its efficient and consistent collection and dissemination are essential for the proper and effective administration of higher education in the states, the data collection, analysis and dissemination services provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), be fully funded by the U.S. Department of Education and that it be recognized that such national data collection and dissemination is in the national public interest and, consistent with the mandate of the Paperwork Reduction Act, results in significant efficiencies and reduction of burden imposed on states and entities and institutions within them.

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ADULT LEARNING

WHEREAS The provision of adequate and accessible educational services to adults is a major challenge to American education; and

WHEREAS Ensuring the adequacy of these services, their accessibility to target populations and the equity of their provision is a uniquely state-level responsibility; and

WHEREAS Federal policy must reflect the special needs of adult learners, particularly to eliminate maldistribution of financial assistance and to support adequate information, guidance and counselling services to enable adults to access and make use of the instructional services they require; and

WHEREAS The states have a particular social and economic stake in the assurance of an adequately educated workforce, and higher education has an obligation to provide an appropriate range of services necessary to meet that need.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. Federal support be increased for research and for demonstration projects to improve the delivery of adult learning services, including expansion of the use of telecommunications and improving the provision of information and counselling services, through augmented funding of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), and

2. Federal funds under Title I of the Higher Education Act be made available as population-based formula grants to state higher education agencies for support of enhanced adult learning services, to be distributed as competitive grants to institutionalize effective adult learning services and to support state or area-wide information, counselling and guidance services, such as Educational Information Centers; and

3. Federal student financial aid policy be revised to eliminate inequities and assure adequate support for needy adult learners, with particular attention to the needs of those who require postsecondary education to remain or become employable, and integrating such efforts with other Federal programs such as JTPA, Unemployment Compensation and Vocational Education; and

4. Tax incentives be examined to stimulate both the use of personal resources and the active involvement of the private sector in the support of adult learning.

TITLE II - LIBRARIES

WHEREAS greater attention should be paid to strengthening libra.y resources, and

WHEREAS support for existing programs should be encouraged;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

SHEEO actively support increased funding for the programs encompassed under the present Title II of the Higher Education Act, including support for statewide and regional library and information activities.

TITLE III - INSTITUTIONAL AID

WHEREAS Federal funding under this Title has on occasion resulted in a disruption of the process of state higher education planning;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

applicant institutions be required to demonstrate consistency between the proposed use of Title III assistance and existing state plans and institutional authorization; and

all applications for all forms of Title III assistance be subject to review and approval by the State Higher Education Agency.

TITLE IV - STUDENT ASSISTANCE

WHEREAS The purpose of student financial assistance is to afford persons the opportunity to embark upon, continue and complete their postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS It has historically been the responsibility of the several states to provide for the availability of postsecondary education within their boundaries: and

WHEREAS The states and the federal government have collectively sought to preserve the unique pluralism that characterizes American higher education; and

WHEREAS There is an overriding federal responsibility to ensure access to postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS the Pell Grant program is the foundation of the federal student financial assistance system; and

WHEREAS Federal funding has never been adequate to meet the nation's needs, and in recent years such inadequacy has become extreme; and

WHEREAS The present system of student financial assistance has created imbalances among direct government support, student and parental contribution and debt burden:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The present steady erosion of direct aid in favor of ever-increasing student debt burden be halted in favor of a more balanced mix of grant, work, loan and student/family support;

2. Examination be made of the actual costs incurred by students, particularly the most needy, in comparison to costs assumed under present student assistance formulas;

3. The Pell Grant program be fully funded so as to assure an adequate maximum award consistent with sufficiently broad eligibility to assure the equitable treatment of all needy students;

5. The State Student Incentive Grant program be revised to provide maximum flexibility to the states in the conduct of their programs of student financial assistance;

6. The policies and administration of federal student assistance programs be designed and carried out in a fashion that does not conflict with State higher education policies;

7. Alternative methods of financing postsecondary education be examined to improve access and equity;

8. Federal student financial aid policy should represent that which best serves the needs of students rather than the interests of particular institutional sectors.

TITLE V - TEACHER EDUCATION

WHEREAS support for teacher education is an important Federal activity; and

WHEREAS the states carry the major burden of the support and direction of teacher education; and

WHEREAS such education is customarily carried out by colleges and universities under the purview of both the state higher education and state education agencies; and

WHEREAS current federal teacher education funds are awarded to institutions solely through state education agencies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

that federal support for pre-service and in-service education of teachers be expanded; and

that the present system of awarding Title V funds be amended to provide for joint SEA-SHEA administration.

TITLE VI - INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

WHEREAS international education is important to the cultural and economic wellbeing of the nation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

federal support for international education be increased.

TITLE VII - FACILITIES

WHEREAS available resources have not been sufficient to enable colleges and universities, public and independent, to maintain and improve their facilities consistent with the requirements of their instructional research and public service obligations; and

WHEREAS the cost of borrowing has increased to near-prohibitive levels over the past two decades; and

WHEREAS present policies tend to ignore the capital needs of higher education;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

1. The facilities grant and loan programs authorized under Title VII of the Higher Education Act be reactivated with authorizations sufficient to permit the states to respond to their present facilities needs;

2. The tax laws be revised to encourage contribution of costly research and instructional instrumentation to institutions of higher education and to stimulate joint utilization of such equipment;

3. Federal mechanisms be established to assist institutional access to preferred credit markets.

TITLE IX - GRADUATE EDUCATION

WHEREAS graduate education is a national enterprise of great importance, providing scholars and researchers who advance the bounds of knowledge in all academic disciplines including those in the arts and sciences and in the technical and professional fields, thereby ensuring this nation a prominent role in the intellectual leadership of the world; and

WHEREAS the present federal funding for graduate education of less than $12 million per year is grossly inadequate and is resulting in a significant decline in the ranks of qualified graduate students in many fields of study; and

WHEREAS such a decline will over time have a significant adverse impact on the nation as a whole and particularly on the supply of the next generation of academic faculty;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

SHEEO strongly supports substantially increased funding for graduate education, including appropriate support for graduate students and for the improvement of graduate programs, as well as for research in the arts and humanities and in the social and physical sciences, both basic and applied.

SHEEO

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

May 1984

Acq P. 153

SHEEO Position on Reauthorization Presented

In hearings being held around the country by Representative Paul Simon, Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, SHEEO officers have commented on proposed revisions of the Higher Education Act. The Act is due to expire at the end of Fiscal Year 1985. A statement drafted by the Federal Relations Committee and its chairman, Harry Snyder, presents the SHEEO perspective. The statement and testimony offered by SHEEOs calls for "restoring the historic balance" in the federal-state relationship.

> Historically, the provision and control of education has been the province of the states. . . . While the Congress has paid obeisance to this concept the reality is that it has been eroded through the enactment of programs that have tended to centralize authority in Washington. . . . It is the policy of SHEEO to foster the restoration of this balance. . . . The state higher education agencies (SHEA) have responsibilities that must be integrated into federal higher education legislation to ensure that federal programs are in fact consistent with this concept.

Shaila Aery, Commissioner of Higher Education in Missouri, confirmed this position in her testimony in St. Louis. "Institutions seeking Title III monies should be required to demonstrate that their proposed use . . . is consistent with the existing state plans developed by the state higher education agencies," she said.

John Corrozi, Executive Director of the Postsecondary Education Commission in Delaware, reminded the Simon Committee that federal policies should recognize the responsibility of state higher education agencies for coordination and also the need for flexibility. Given wide differences in the fifty states, Corrozi believes Title I of the Act should provide population-based formula grants to state higher education agencies that would then be distributed on a competitive basis. "Title II support for libraries is another example where relevant state interest must be considered," he added.

Eleanor McMahon, Commissioner of Higher Education in Rhode Island, also testified at the Washington hearings on the Simon Bill.

The SHEEO draft statement comments on each title of the Higher Education Act and calls for adding

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Reauthorization

(continued from page 1)

a definition of a state higher education agency to the act's general provisions. It also seeks protection of the federal government's data collection and dissemination activities from "the vagaries of the appropriations process. . . . The law should require the Department of Education to collect and disseminate critical higher education data rather than make such activities subject to the discretion of the Secretary." The Title IV (student assistance) statement supports efforts to simplify procedures through consolidating programs. It asks for expansion of the SSIG program to allow support of state-run work study programs, and it advocates consideration of the recommendations of the National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs on revising the guaranteed student loan program.

The draft statement was the subject of the Federal Relations Committee's spring meeting on May 1 in Washington, D.C. Copies are available to SHEEO members for their comment. Contact the SHEEO office.

SHEEO

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Fall 1984

Resolutions on Reauthorization Adopted

On August 1, 1984, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) adopted several position statements on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. These positions, stated as resolutions, were approved by the association membership at the SHEEO Annual Meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota July 30 through August 1. The resolutions call upon the U.S. Congress to:

1. Define within the Higher Education Act a State Higher Education Agency (SHEA);
2. Recognize that higher education data collections and dissemination services of the National Center for Education Statistics are in the national public interest and should be fully funded by the U.S. Department of Education;
3. Increase support for research and for demonstration projects to improve the delivery of adult learning services;
4. Increase funding for the programs encompassed under the present Title II of the Higher Education Act (Libraries);
5. Require institutions applying for assistance under Title III (Institutional Aid) to demonstrate consistency between their proposals and existing state plans and institutional authorization, and that applications for such assistance be subject to review and approval by the state higher education agency;
6. Halt the erosion of direct aid to students, fully fund the Pell Grant program, revise the State Student Incentive Grant program to provide maximum flexibility to the states, eliminate conflicts between the policies and administration of federal student assistance programs and state higher education policies, examine alternative methods of financing postsecondary education to improve access and equity, and commit to a federal student financial aid policy that best serves the needs of students rather than the interests of particular institutional sectors;
7. Expand federal support for preservice and inservice education of teachers and direct state agencies to jointly administer the system for awarding Title V funds (teacher education);
8. Increase federal support for international education;
9. Reactivate facility grant and loan programs authorized under Title VII (Facilities), with authorizations sufficient to permit states to res-

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pond to their present facility needs, revise tax laws to encourage contributions of costly research and instructional instrumentation to institutions of higher education and establish federal mechanisms to assist institutional access to preferred credit markets; and

10. Substantially increase funding for graduate education, including appropriate support for graduate students and improving graduate programs.

The resolutions were drafted by the 1983-84 SHEEO Federal Relations Committee, chaired by Harry M. Snyder, executive director of the Council on Higher Education in Kentucky, with assistance from legal counsel Michael Goldstein. A copy of the report containing the full text of each resolution may be obtained from the SHEEO office.

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should give special attention to restoring and strengthening the incentives for employers to provide employee tuition benefits—a source of support that is beginning to dry up without ever approaching its potential.

Summary

The state's overriding responsibility for higher education in general applies with special force to adult learning. We should assume greater responsibility for services across the entire lifelong learning spectrum, from literacy programs to professional continuing education. We should seek state-level input into research policy in the adult learning field and distribute a significant proportion of implementation grants through state agencies, subject to federal guidelines. While the particular state agency should be designated by the governor, in most states it probably should be the existing state higher education agency.

In building constituencies for these positions, SHEEO should work closely with those interests outside higher education, particularly in the private sector, who will benefit from coordination of adult learning programs; and above all with the governors, whose concern for a strong state role is in close accord with our own. Those of us who have been involved with successful statewide adult learning programs should call upon government and business leaders with whom we work to support us during the reauthorization debate.

Reminder to Federal Relations and Executive Committees:

Winter 1984 Meeting

Dates: December 11–12, 1984

Place: Dupont Plaza Hotel
Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C.

SHEEO

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